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BOOK REVIEWS

Le Génie féminin français. By MARTHE BORELLY. Paris, Boccard, 300 p.

In her well-written book, Marthe Borelly examines what are the limits of woman's personality and what her true place in society is, what it was in the past, what it must and will be after the war. The book contains also an interesting study of love, and the relation existing between love and fashion.

The author does not admit the principle of the equality of the sexes. "Nature," she says, "has made man and woman complementary." It established a law of necessity and not of equality. Marthe Borelly has no sympathy for the suffragists. She seeks to direct the future of her sex along the path marked out by the highest feminine culture of the past.

For many people, the ideas of the author will perhaps appear to be old fashioned, but she expresses the views of the majority of French womanhood. While not a scientific treatise, the book is very well written and is completely free from hysteria, which is so common in discussions of the woman question.

M. P.

Le Sens de la mort. By PAUL BOURGET. Paris. Plon, 1916. 328 p.

One of the books most read in France since 1916 and also one of the most commented on is this stirring meditation, *Le Sens de la mort*, upon a topic that the immense and frightful war brings constantly to our thoughts.

The author of "Le Disciple" and "Les Essais de Psychologie Contemporaine" shows us on one side a superior man, a great physician. He is atheistic, he denies the spiritual forces and believes only in the positive ones. Death stands suddenly before him. He cannot adapt himself to it. "He accepts it with courage, but it is a courage formed of crushed resignation. It is his intellect bowing, with a desperate impotence, under the action of irresistible and supreme forces, for him monstrous, because they created him only to crush him." On the other side, Bourget shows a young French officer, with a culture not far removed from the physician's culture, but the young man believes in God, in a future life, in a salvation "which is to keep living the best of ourselves." He is wounded, he knows death is coming, his doctrine allows him and gives him the strength to accept it, he adapts himself to it. Then where the other sinks, he triumphs. For the former one death is "an absurd catastrophe," for the latter it is a "consummation, an accomplishment." And Bourget affirms that "Death has no meaning if it is but an end, it has one, if it is a sacrifice.

Le Sens de la mort not only brings forth a very interesting problem of religious psychology but it can be interpreted as a sign of the new spirit which is being born in France.

M. P.

Mors et Vita. By ALFRED LOISY. Paris, Nourry, 1916. 86 p.

Mr. Loisy, the author of this little book, is a former catholic priest who, following the example of Renan, broke with the church because he could no longer blindly believe in the Roman Catholic dogmas.